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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/710,276	06/30/2004	Bogdan Radu	MASL-44	4275
37690 7590 01/08/2007 WOOD, HERRON & EVANS, LLP (LEAR) 2700 CAREW TOWER 441 VINE STREET CINCINNATI, OH 45202			EXAMINER STRIMBU, GREGORY J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3634	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		01/08/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/710,276

Applicant(s)

RADU ET AL.

Examiner

Gregory J. Strimbu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 October 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 June 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date See Continuation Sheet.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Election/Restrictions

It light of the cancellation of claims 12-14 of Group II, the restriction requirement of October 11, 2006 has been rendered moot.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character "14" has been used to designate both carrier plate of the first embodiment, the second embodiment, and the third embodiment. Since the carrier panel for each embodiment is different, it requires a different reference character.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because the status of the similar co-pending application 10/709,544 requires updating.

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Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 4, 5, 10, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Recitations such as "a non-structural material" on lines 1-2 of claim 4 render the claims indefinite because it is unclear what comprises a non-structural material. What weight must a material be capable of supporting before it can be referred to as a structural material? Additionally, most any material in sufficient quantity can be considered a structural material.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

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Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 6,983,978 in view of Youngs et al. Claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 6,983,978 are silent concerning a carrier plate.

However, Youngs et al. discloses a carrier plate 16 positioned between a door frame 12 and a trim panel 18, the carrier plate comprising polypropylene, and including a sealable opening 19.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 6,983,978 with a carrier plate, as taught by Youngs et al., to reduce the amount of noise transferred to the vehicle compartment. See column 5, lines 43-47 of Youngs et al.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Youngs et al. (US 6,892,496). Youngs et al. discloses a vehicle door assembly for a motor

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vehicle, comprising: a door frame 12; a door trim panel 18 secured removably to said door frame; a carrier plate 16 positioned between said door frame and said door trim panel; and a door component 32 fastened to said door frame and to said carrier plate, the door component 32 comprises a door latch, the carrier plate 16 comprises polypropylene (see column 3, lines 12-13), the carrier plate includes a sealable opening 19, the trim panel 18 is unitary and comprises a first plurality of fastener openings (not shown, but comprising the openings through which the fasteners 64 extend) in said door frame; a second plurality of fastener openings (not shown, but comprising the openings within which the fasteners 64 extend) in said door component 32 registered with said first plurality of fastener openings; and a plurality of fasteners 64 installed in said registered first plurality and second plurality of fastener openings to secure said door component to said door frame, said first plurality and second plurality of fastener openings being located arbitrarily inside an outer perimeter of said door frame.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Morrison et al. is cited for disclosing a re-sealable panel for a vehicle door. Lin et al. '917 and '047 are cited for disclosing a removable trim panel. Del Pozo Abejon et al. is cited for disclosing a releasable fastener for a trim panel. Samways et al. is cited for disclosing vehicle door components attached directly to a vehicle door frame.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gregory J. Strimbu whose telephone number is 571-272-6836. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:00 to 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Cuomo can be reached on 571-272-6856. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Gregory J. Strimbu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3634
December 28, 2006

Continuation of Attachment(s) 3). Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08), Paper No(s)/Mail Date :10/19/05, 4/18/05, 3/25/05, 6/30/04.